

"Runnymede" (Thomas Cropper House)
Secondary Highway 662, north side of Walston Creek,
east of Accomac
Accomac Vicinity
Accomack County
Virginia

HABS No. VA-628

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. VA-628

"RUNNYMEDE" (THOMAS CROPPER HOUSE)

Address: Secondary Highway 662, north side of Walston Creek, east of Accomac, Accomac Vicinity, Accomack County, Virginia.

Present Owner: B. Drummond Ayres, Accomac, Virginia.

Present Occupant: A. Stuart Parks.

Present Use: Home for tenant farmer, Mr. A. Stuart Parks.

Brief Statement of Significance: An example of a characteristic type of Eastern Shore of Virginia house called the "big room, little room, colonnade, and kitchen."

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Original and Subsequent Owners: Thomas Cropper, 1792-1830; William Parramore, 1830-1841; James Parramore, 1841-1894; Miss Elizabeth A. Parramore, 1894-1918; Miss Lizzie E. Parramore 1918-1955; B. Drummond Ayres, 1955 to present.

B. Date of Erection: Oldest section, the "little room," has date of 1797 molded in brick of north chimney. The larger section, the "big room," is said by Whitelaw to have been built in 1862. However, the writer hereof believes that the early paneling in this section and other early woodwork, the half brick wall, the deep cellar, and the early type of porch, all indicate an earlier construction date. The writer is inclined to believe that this section was originally story-and-a-half, possibly with three dormers front and back, and probably built shortly after the "little house." The present occupant, Mr. Parks, age 72, who has lived in the house during the last 18 years, and who has lived in the area all his life says he has always heard that this section was originally story-and-a-half with dormer windows. Mr. Parks is intelligent and knowledgeable and very interested in the property.

C. Sources of Information: Accomack County Records; interviews with elderly persons; Ralph T. Whitelaw, Virginia's Eastern Shore, A History of North Hampton and Accomack Counties, 2 vols. (Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1951).

Prepared by Commander John A. Upshur
Consultant, Colonial Williamsburg
October 1961.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: Good example of "big room, little room, colonnade, and kitchen."
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Over-all dimensions: "Big room, little room, colonnade and kitchen" type layout. "Big room," two stories high, "little room," one-and-a-half stories, colonnade and kitchen, one story.
2. Foundations: Brick.
3. Wall construction: Oldest section has brick end or gable walls, balance frame construction with clapboards.
4. Openings:
 - a. Doors: Has 8-panel doors (entrance) at each end of side hallway in "big room" section.
 - b. Windows: "Big room" has nine over nine light and nine over six light, double-hung sash on first floor and six over six light sash on second floor.
5. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable roofs covered with wood shingles except "colonnade" which has asphalt shingles.
 - b. Cornice: Wood, box cornice.
 - c. Dormers: "Little room" has one dormer on each roof slope. "Big room" is said to have had three dormers on each roof slope originally.
6. Chimneys: Brick chimneys with no caps but plain tops.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: There is one room on the first floor in each of the four, main sections of the structure and a second-floor room in the "big room" and one in the "little room" sections.
2. Stairways: Stairway in hallway of "big room" section.
3. Flooring: Wood.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster walls and ceilings with chair rail in first-floor room of "big room" section and wainscot in southwest wall. Northeast wall of first-floor room of "little room" section is paneled; paneled wainscot on the other three walls plus a wood cornice.

5. Hardware: Rim locks.

6. Lighting: Electric.

7. Heating: Space heaters.

D. Site: Set in pasture land; faces southeast toward Walston Creek. Modern horizontal board fence enclosure.

Prepared by Archie W. Franzen, Architect
National Park Service
March 1960.